

IN THE CLAIMS

Claims 1-93 (cancelled)

94. (amended) A manufacturing method, comprising:

~~(a) positioning a dispenser in close proximity to or in contact with a stent, the stent having a frame structure and spaces separating the frame structure; and~~

~~(b) moving the~~ causing a coating dispenser to be moved, for the application of a coating substance, along a path defined by a pattern of the a frame structure of a stent while maintaining the dispenser in close proximity next to or in contact with the frame structure such that the coating dispenser avoids the application of the coating substance in a space between the frame structures or significantly minimizes the amount of coating material that is applied in the space between the frame structures.

95. (amended) The method of Claim 94, additionally including ~~applying a substance from the dispenser to the frame structure~~ causing the coating dispenser and the stent to be positioned next to or in contact with each other.

96. (amended) The method of Claim 95 94, additionally including applying heat from the dispenser to the substance applied to the frame structure to solidify the substance on the frame structure.

97. (amended) The method of Claim 95 94, additionally including coordinating the flow rate of the substance out from the dispenser to prevent any significant overflow of the substance off of the frame structure.

98. (amended) The method of Claim 95 94, wherein the substance comprises a ~~polymer, a solvent, and optionally a therapeutic substance added thereto.~~

99. (original) The method of Claim 94, wherein the dispenser comprises an ink-jet printhead or a microinjection syringe.

100. (amended) The method of Claim 94, wherein the dispenser comprises a heat source to apply heat to the coating substance.

101. (amended) The method of Claim 94, ~~wherein the dispenser applies heat to the stent~~ wherein the path is between a first position and a second position along the pattern of the frame structure.

102. (amended) The method of Claim 94, wherein the stent is maintained in a stationary position.

103. (original) The method of Claim 94, wherein the stent is capable of moving independently of the dispenser.

104. (original) The method of Claim 94, wherein the movement of the dispenser is controlled by a central processing unit.

105. (original) The method of Claim 94, wherein the movement of the dispenser is controlled by a central processing unit and a feedback system to provide information about the pattern of the frame structure or the positioning of the dispenser relative to the frame structure to the central processing unit.

106. (amended) The method of Claim 94, wherein the path along which the coating dispenser is moved is a non-linear path ~~a portion of the pattern of the frame structure is non-linear.~~

107. (amended) The method of Claim 94, wherein the dispenser is ~~positioned~~ at an angle of less than 90 degrees to the surface of the frame structure.

108. (original) The method of Claim 94, wherein the dispenser is capable of moving in intervals of less than 0.1 inches.

109. (original) The method of Claim 94, wherein the dispenser is capable of moving in intervals of less than 0.001 inches.

110. (amended) A manufacturing method, comprising:

(a) ~~positioning a dispenser in close proximity to or in contact with a stent, the stent having a frame structure and spaces separating the frame structure; and~~

(b) causing a moving the stent to be moved while maintaining the such that the positioning of a dispenser, for the application of a coating substance, is maintained along a path defined by a pattern of the a frame structure of the stent and in close proximity to or in contact with the frame structure such that the dispenser avoids application of the coating substance in a space between the frame structures or significantly minimizes the amount of coating material that is applied in the space between the frame structure.

111. (amended) The method of Claim 110, additionally including ~~applying a substance from the dispenser to the frame structure~~ causing the stent and the coating dispenser to be positioned next to or in contact with each other.

112. (amended) The method of Claim ~~111~~ 110, additionally including applying heat from the dispenser to the substance to solidify the substance on the frame structure.

113. (amended) The method of Claim ~~111~~ 110, additionally including coordinating the flow rate of the substance out from the dispenser so as to prevent any significant overflow of the substance off of the frame structure.

114. (amended) The method of Claim ~~111~~ 110, wherein the substance comprises a polymer, a solvent, and optionally a therapeutic substance ~~added thereto.~~

115. (original) The method of Claim 110, wherein the dispenser comprises an ink-jet printhead or a microinjection syringe.

116. (amended) The method of Claim 110, wherein the dispenser comprises a heat source to apply heat to the coating substance.

117. (amended) The method of Claim 110, ~~wherein the dispenser applies heat to the stent~~ wherein the path is between a first position and a second position along the pattern of the frame structure.

118. (original) The method of Claim 110, wherein the dispenser is held in a stationary position.

119. (original) The method of Claim 110, wherein the dispenser is capable of rotating about the circumference of the stent.

120. (original) The method of Claim 110, wherein the dispenser is capable of moving independently of the stent.

121. (original) The method of Claim 110, wherein the movement of the stent is controlled by a central processing unit.

122. (original) The method of Claim 110, wherein the movement of the stent is controlled by a central processing unit and a feedback system to provide information about the pattern of the frame structure or the positioning of the stent relative to the dispenser to the central processing unit.

123. (amended) The method of Claim 110, wherein the path ~~a portion~~ of the pattern of the frame structure is non-linear.

124. (amended) The method of Claim 110, wherein the dispenser is ~~positioned~~ at an angle of less than 90 degrees to the surface of the frame structure.

125. (original) The method of Claim 110, wherein the stent is capable of being moved in intervals of less than 0.1 inches.

126. (original) The method of Claim 110, wherein the stent is capable of being moved in intervals of less than 0.001 inches.

127. (new) The method of Claim 94, wherein the coating substance is applied to an outer surface of the frame structure such that the method is configured to avoid application of the coating substance on a sidewall of the frame structure or to minimize the amount of coating substance that is applied on a sidewall of the frame structure.

128. (new) The method of Claim 94, additionally comprising causing the stent to be moved in concert with the dispenser so as to maintain the positioning of the dispenser along the path of the pattern of the frame structure and/or so as to maintain the dispenser next to or in contact with the stent.

129. (new) The method of Claim 94, wherein the dispenser is maintained in close proximity to or in contact with the stent for the application of the coating substance.

130. (new) The method of Claim 94, wherein the stent is maintained in close proximity to or in contact with the dispenser for the application of the coating substance.

131. (new) The method of Claim 110, wherein the coating substance is applied to an outer surface of the frame structure such that the method is configured to avoid application of the coating substance on a sidewall of the frame structure or to minimize the amount of coating substance that is applied on a sidewall of the frame structure.

132. (new) The method of Claim 110, wherein the stent is maintained in close proximity to or in contact with the dispenser for the application of the coating substance.

133. (new) The method of Claim 110, wherein the dispenser is maintained in close proximity to or in contact with the stent for the application of the coating substance.

134. (new) The method of Claim 110, additionally comprising causing the dispenser to be moved in concert with the stent so as to maintain the positioning of the dispenser along the path of the pattern of the frame structure and/or so as to maintain the dispenser next to or in contact with the stent.

CONCLUSION

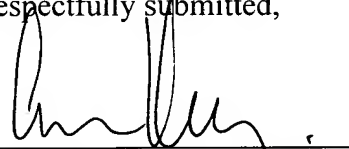
If the Examiner has any questions or needs any additional information, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned attorney at (415) 954-0345.

If for any reason an insufficient fee has been paid, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge the insufficiency to Deposit Account No. 07-1850.

Date: May 18, 2004

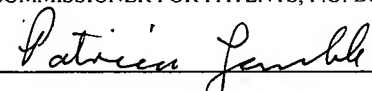
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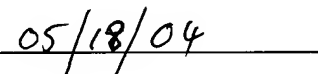
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